

HOUSE BILL 893

M2

5lr1447
CF SB 76

By: **Delegates Jacobs, Adams, Arentz, Arian, Boyce, Chisholm, Ghrist, Grammer, Hutchinson, T. Morgan, Nawrocki, Otto, Schmidt, and Wivell**

Introduced and read first time: January 30, 2025

Assigned to: Environment and Transportation

Committee Report: Favorable with amendments

House action: Adopted

Read second time: February 27, 2025

CHAPTER _____

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Tidal Fish Licenses – Oyster Authorizations – Administrative Penalties**

3 FOR the purpose of requiring the Department of Natural Resources to suspend for a certain
4 time ~~periods~~ period, rather than revoke, a person's oyster authorization for a first
5 offense of knowingly committing certain violations in the oyster fishery; requiring
6 ~~the reinstatement of a person's entitlement to engage in the oyster fishery under~~
7 ~~certain circumstances~~ providing for the reinstatement for certain persons of an
8 oyster authorization and an entitlement to engage or work in the oyster fishery;
9 altering a certain offense related to the use of prohibited gear that serves as grounds
10 for suspension of an oyster authorization; repealing a certain time period within
11 which a certain administrative hearing must be held; and generally relating to
12 administrative penalties for oyster authorizations.

13 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
14 Article – Natural Resources
15 Section 4–1210
16 Annotated Code of Maryland
17 (2023 Replacement Volume and 2024 Supplement)

18 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
19 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

20 **Article – Natural Resources**

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.

Underlining indicates amendments to bill.

~~Strike out~~ indicates matter stricken from the bill by amendment or deleted from the law by amendment.



4-1210.

(a) (1) In addition to any other penalty or fine provided in this title, a person who holds an authorization to catch oysters under § 4-701 of this title and receives a citation for an offense listed under paragraph (2) of this subsection may, **IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS SECTION**, have the authorization [revoked in accordance with this section]:

(I) **FOR A FIRST VIOLATION, SUSPENDED FOR UP TO ~~2~~ 5 YEARS;**
AND

(II) **FOR A SECOND OR SUBSEQUENT VIOLATION, ~~SUSPENDED~~**
~~FOR UP TO 10 YEARS~~ REVOKED.

(2) The following offenses, committed in violation of this title or of any regulation adopted under this title, are grounds for [revocation] **SUSPENSION OR REVOCATION** of an authorization to catch oysters under this section:

(i) Taking oysters located more than 200 feet within a closed or prohibited area;

(ii) Taking oysters with gear that is prohibited in that area **WHILE MORE THAN 200 FEET WITHIN THE PROHIBITED AREA;**

(iii) Taking oysters outside of a time restriction for the harvest of oysters by more than 1 hour;

(iv) Taking oysters during closed seasons; and

(v) Taking oysters from a leased area by a person other than the leaseholder or the leaseholder's designee.

(b) (1) [(i)] Before the [revocation] **SUSPENSION OR REVOCATION** of an authorization to catch oysters under this section, the Department shall hold a hearing on the matter in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act under Title 10, Subtitle 2 of the State Government Article.

[(ii)] A hearing held under subparagraph (i) of this paragraph shall be held within 90 days after the cited individual commits the offense listed under subsection (a)(2) of this section.]

(2) After a hearing is conducted under paragraph (1) of this subsection, if the presiding officer finds or concludes that the person knowingly has committed an offense listed under subsection (a)(2) of this section, the Department shall [revoke] **SUSPEND OR REVOKE** the person's authorization to catch oysters **IN ACCORDANCE WITH SUBSECTION (A)(1) OF THIS SECTION.**

(c) A person who is aggrieved by the final decision of the Department may obtain judicial review of the decision in accordance with the Administrative Procedure Act under Title 10, Subtitle 2 of the State Government Article.

(d) A person whose authorization has been [revoked] SUSPENDED OR REVOKED in accordance with this section may not engage or work in the oyster fishery **WHILE** SUSPENDED OR REVOKED whether or not [it] **THE WORK** requires the use of another license.

~~(E) (1) THIS SUBSECTION APPLIES TO A PERSON'S AUTHORIZATION TO CATCH OYSTERS THAT WAS REVOKED UNDER THIS SECTION BEFORE JULY 1, 2025.~~

~~(2) A PERSON DESCRIBED IN PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION SHALL HAVE THEIR ENTITLEMENT TO ENGAGE IN THE OYSTER FISHERY REINSTATED IF:~~

~~(I) 1. THE AUTHORIZATION HAS BEEN REVOKED FOR AT LEAST 2 YEARS; AND~~

~~2. THE REVOCATION WAS THE PERSON'S FIRST OFFENSE ADJUDICATED AS A KNOWING VIOLATION UNDER THIS SECTION; OR~~

~~(II) 1. THE AUTHORIZATION HAS BEEN REVOKED FOR AT LEAST 10 YEARS; AND~~

~~2. THE REVOCATION WAS THE PERSON'S SECOND OR SUBSEQUENT OFFENSE ADJUDICATED AS A KNOWING VIOLATION UNDER THIS SECTION~~ THE DEPARTMENT MAY ACCEPT AN APPLICATION FOR AND ISSUE AN OYSTER AUTHORIZATION TO A PERSON WHOSE OYSTER AUTHORIZATION WAS REVOKED UNDER THIS SECTION BEFORE JULY 1, 2025, BEGINNING 5 YEARS AFTER THE DATE OF REVOCATION.

(2) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL REINSTATE A PERSON'S ENTITLEMENT TO ENGAGE OR WORK IN THE OYSTER FISHERY FOR A PERSON WHOSE AUTHORIZATION TO CATCH OYSTERS WAS REVOKED UNDER THIS SECTION BEFORE JULY 1, 2025, BEGINNING 5 YEARS AFTER THE DATE OF REVOCATION.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2025.